



201401219

October 1, 2014

MOTION

WE MOVE that the City adopt the updated human services strategies and priorities proposed by the Human Services Fund Priority Review Work Group, as outlined in the attached memorandum ("Recommendations for City Human Services Funding").

WE FURTHER MOVE that in the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the City allocate \$1.5 million to fulfill the "Increase Gainful Employment" human services goal as outlined in the proposal.

WE FURTHER MOVE that in the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the City allocate an additional \$1.5 million to fulfill the "Reducing Homelessness" goal as outlined in the proposal. The Administration should identify appropriate General Fund sources for this priority that would not impact basic City services, such as the one-time allocations to outside organizations made during the 2014-2015 budget process.

WE FURTHER MOVE that the Administration, led by the Police Chief and representatives of the Police Department, establish a working group to research the feasibility and develop a proposal, including a potential timeline and costs, to build a citywide collaborative focused on reducing violence. We further move that once additional human services funds become available, the City shall establish the citywide collaborative based on the working group's recommendations.

WE FURTHER MOVE that, to allow programs sufficient time to adjust to the new priorities, the City allocate the remaining balance of the 2014-2015 Human Services funding (\$751,500) as a six-month extension of currently-funded human services programs for the period February 1, 2015 - July 31, 2015, subject to review by the Human Services Advisory Committee. This process shall continue to be administered by The United Way of Greater Cincinnati using the guidelines previously adopted by Council in Motion #201400220.

A blue ink signature of Yvette Simpson.

Councilmember Yvette Simpson

A blue ink signature of Vice Mayor David Mann.

Vice Mayor David Mann

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10/7/14
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Statement

City Council passed Motion #201400220, which expressed its desire to revisit the City's current human services strategies and priorities, last revised in 2008. The Human Services Fund Priority Review Working Group was created as a result, and was comprised of representatives from City Council, the Mayor's Office, the Department of Trade & Development, the Human Services Advisory Committee, the Community Development Advisory Board, and the United Way of Greater Cincinnati.

The attached recommendations were created after a thorough review and analysis of the City's current funding priorities, opportunities for alignment with other City and community resources, and identified needs and current gaps in service. The United Way of Greater Cincinnati served as consultant to this group, supplying detailed city and community information and data, as well as providing a framework for the discussion.

One of the Working Group's recommendations is to restore Human Services Funding to its previous level of 1.5% of the General Fund. In recent years, the City has reduced its allocation to \$1.5 million, or approximately 0.43% of the General Fund. By allocating an additional \$1.5 million in 2015-2016, the City's Human Services Funding will be approximately 0.85% of the General Fund, closer to the recommended 1.5% goal. The adopters of this motion intend that, as additional human services funding becomes available, the City will fully fund the Working Group's attached recommendations.

To: Members of Council

From: Human Services Fund Priority Review Working Group

Re: Recommendations for City Human Services Funding

Date: October 1, 2014

The Human Services Fund Priority Review Working Group was convened by Councilmember Yvette Simpson and Vice Mayor David Mann in compliance with Council Motion 201400220. The Working Group included Vice Mayor Mann, Councilmember Simpson, and representatives from the Mayor's office, the Department of Trade and Development, the Human Services Advisory Committee and the Community Development Advisory Board, with staff support from the United Way. As background material, the group reviewed the attached document which details current City investments and wider community efforts.

The Working Group recognizes the primary challenge facing Council – the City's human service needs far exceed current resources. Current Human Services investments are spread among three broad priorities with six focus areas and 54 funded programs. As a result, it is impossible to "move the needle" in any particular area. Although funded programs achieve results for the individuals they serve, the current allocation of \$1.5 million is not sufficient for community level impact.

The Human Services Priority Review Working Group strongly recommends restoring Human Services Funding to 1.5% of the General Fund. If that is not possible, we recommend focusing the current investment on one human services goal. To achieve measurable impact, Council must adequately invest in one goal before establishing additional goals.

I. Recommendation for Human Services Investment: Increase Gainful Employment

The Human Services Priority Review Working Group identified four potential human services goals within the current investment — all are key to making Cincinnati a strong and healthy community. We reviewed the merits of investing in established community efforts and of filling service gaps to increase impact. We also discussed the opportunity for Council to leverage city leadership and resources to build collaborative citywide efforts.

With the current human services investment, the Working Group unanimously recommends prioritizing the goal of increasing gainful employment through workforce training, youth employment and removing barriers to work. This has great potential for measurable impact and aligns with established community efforts and City priorities.

II. Additional Human Services Goals

Council could choose to commit to additional human services goals when new funding is available. With a substantial increase in investment, Council could add one or more of the other identified potential human services goals:

- Reducing homelessness
- Reducing violence
- Reducing hunger and improving family stability

III. Recommendations for Transition

Once a human services goal is selected, a proposal process will be conducted and agencies will have the opportunity to respond. Some programs will already align with the goal; some organizations will adjust their strategies; some new organizations will apply. Some valued community organizations may no longer align with the goal and could lose City funds.

To ease this transition, Council should offer adequate notice of the change and a transition period. Current contracts should be extended to the end of FY 2015. This will give time to design appropriate strategies and performance measures, and to manage a competitive and transparent proposal process. Agencies will have the opportunity to respond to the proposal process, reconfigure programming, or find other funding sources. Funding under the new priority would begin with the 2016-2017 Biennial Budget.

IV. Increasing Gainful Employment in Cincinnati

The Priority Review Working Group reviewed current Human Services priorities and focus areas and recommended prioritizing the goal of increasing gainful employment. This recommendation was based on several considerations:

Gainful employment can lift a family out of poverty and can reduce chronic crises such as food insecurity and homelessness; when youth are on a path to gainful employment, a lifetime of these future issues can be avoided. Employment can lead to longer-term stability in neighborhoods and the entire city.

Strong community partnerships are already established. Partners for a Competitive Workforce, representing more than 150 local employers, workforce development programs, higher education and workforce investment boards, has been working since 2008 to help unemployed and underemployed individuals obtain the necessary skills and credentials to advance in high-demand industries in our region.

A community-level goal has been established. The Bold Goals for Our Region, endorsed by the City of Cincinnati and more than 250 businesses, civic and nonprofit organizations, include the goal that 90% of the workforce will be gainfully employed by 2020. The city's human services investment could accelerate achievement of that goal.

In alignment with current community efforts, the City Consolidated Plan and the Mayor's new HandUp initiative, there are several specific gap areas where the Human Services investment could achieve significant impact.

Current Community Level Goal: 90% of the workforce will be gainfully employed by 2020
(Source: Bold Goals for Our Region)

Baseline: The City of Cincinnati inclusive employment rate was 86% in 2012. To meet the goal, approximately 8,000 additional City residents must be employed by 2020.

Within the goal of increasing gainful employment, we have identified potential indicators, strategies and opportunities for investment:

Potential Progress Indicators:

- Increase number of City of Cincinnati residents who complete workforce development programs; obtain industry-recognized certifications; obtain employment; retain employment for 12 months; maintain employment with annual wages above \$23,850 (100% of federal poverty for a family of four).

- Increase number of City of Cincinnati youth who are employed or enrolled in school, military or community service. Current estimates of “disconnected” youth ages 16-24 who are not in school and not in the labor force, range from 4,400 to 6,800.

In evaluating proposals, the Human Services Advisory Committee could be directed to consider how the Human Services Fund addresses disparities in employment and income by neighborhood, gender, age, and/or race.

Potential Strategies: A proposal process would ask local organizations to offer strategies to increase gainful employment in Cincinnati. Potential strategies may include:

- Employment training, job readiness, and certification programs for adults, youth, individuals with multiple barriers and long-term unemployed.
- Workforce Supports: programs that remove barriers to employment and directly support job-seekers and new entrants to the workforce with access to childcare, transportation, mental health services or addiction treatment, legal issues, work attire, housing, credit, etc.

V. Additional Human Services Goals

Council could choose to commit to additional human services goals when substantial new funding is available. In selecting additional goals, Council could decide to increase impact by aligning with established community efforts or could take a leadership role in building capacity for goal areas that do not have community-level collaborations and/or plans.

A. Reducing Homelessness

Cincinnati and Hamilton County jointly adopted the Homeless to Homes plan for homeless individuals in 2009. As of 2014, a new Family Homeless Services Study is underway to review needs of homeless families and children. The City also produces a Consolidated Plan which details City efforts to address homelessness.

Cincinnati/Hamilton County has a coordinated system of care for the homeless and community-wide strategies led by Strategies to End Homelessness (STEh). STEh is funded by the City to manage some of its federal funding including HOME, HOPWA, the Continuum of Care, and the Homeless to Homes plan.

Thirty homeless agencies share aggregate data through the VESTA Homeless Management Information System.

Almost all the federal homelessness funding that the City receives is restricted for transitional housing, rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing. This funding cannot be spent for shelter operations and only a small portion is available for homelessness prevention.

Homelessness prevention programs pay rent, mortgage or utilities to keep a family or individual housed while providing case management to address underlying problems. Locally, these types of programs have the lowest per-capita costs and have achieved a 92% success rate in keeping those most at-risk from entering homelessness.

Homelessness is inextricably linked to the availability of affordable housing. People may also need increased income; protection from abuse; financial services; and mental health, addiction, sensory, physical and cognitive disabilities services to maintain housing.

Current Community Level Goal: Reduce homelessness by 50% by 2017 (*Strategies to End Homelessness*)

Baselines: 8,271 homeless persons were counted in Hamilton County in 2013 in street outreach, emergency shelter or transitional housing. Of these, 1,531 people were living in places unfit for human habitation, in cars or on the streets. Also in 2013, 1,530 families seeking shelter were turned away due to lack of available shelter space or services.

Within the goal of reducing homelessness, we have identified some potential indicators, strategies and opportunities for investment:

Potential Progress Indicators:

- Increase number of high-risk families and individuals receiving quality homelessness prevention services and remain in their own homes.
- Decrease number of Cincinnati families turned away from shelter by increasing prevention services and/or increasing shelter space.
- Decrease number of families who return to shelter more than once by providing quality stabilization/case management services in shelter and during transition/rehousing.

Potential Strategies: A proposal process would ask local organizations to offer strategies that align with existing community strategies to prevent and reduce homelessness. Some opportunities include restoring funding for proven homeless prevention programs that keep struggling families and adults in current homes, and increasing capacity of family homeless shelters that currently only meet about 30% of the need.

B. Reducing Violence

There is no existing coordinated plan for violence reduction within the City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County or the region. The City's consolidated plan calls for a suitable living environment which includes public safety and blight removal. The Cincinnati Youth Commission Youth Study may identify strategies addressing youth violence; the Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence addresses gang and street violence for individuals 18 and older.

The City could achieve significant impact by taking a leadership role in coordinating efforts to reduce violence. A collective impact approach would include establishing community vision and strategy, supporting aligned activities, establishing shared measurement practices, building public will, advancing policy, and mobilizing resources. Achieving impact would require a long-term commitment of city resources and leadership.

An overall goal of reducing violence may be too broad because of the many categories of violence, including elder abuse, domestic violence, child abuse, bullying, sexual assault, suicide, gang violence and street crime. If focusing on violence reduction, City Council may consider choosing to focus on a specific population or category of violence.

Current Community Level Goal: No specific goal has been established.

Potential City Goal: Cincinnati Council members have stated that they wish to reduce the homicide rate, reduce the shooting rate, and increase perception of neighborhood safety.

Potential Targeted Goal: City Council might choose to focus its violence-reduction strategy specifically on reducing the number of youth and young adults who are victims or perpetrators of violence.

Baseline for Youth Violence: In 2013 there were 75 homicides in Cincinnati, including 10 juvenile victims and 7 juvenile perpetrators arrested; 9,214 arrests/counts of perpetrators under age 21; 6,000 crimes against youth.

Potential Progress Indicators for Youth Violence:

- Reduce rates of school suspensions or disciplinary incidents.
- Reduce number of youth with court involvement; juvenile crime rate; assaults; arrests; homicides of persons under 21.
- Reduce rate of recidivism in young offenders.
- Increase youth engagement in positive community programs, mentoring relationships; volunteerism and safe out-of-school activities.

Potential Strategies: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has outlined a number of models for community violence prevention which are in use in other communities. These require collaboration between community health departments; police; courts and corrections; parks and recreation; schools; faith-based organizations; trained mentors/interceptors; neighborhood organizations and community services. These often focus on specific neighborhoods and place-based strategies.

A proposal process would ask local organizations to offer strategies to reduce violence in Cincinnati; most of these would be services to specific at-risk individuals. To achieve community-level impact, the City should consider building a regional collaborative with capacity to engage government and community partners, possibly select targeted neighborhoods, and develop plans, strategies and measures.

C. Reducing Hunger and Improving Family Stability

Hunger results from economic instability and poverty. Programs address hunger in the short term through emergency assistance by providing meals, food, clothing, or one-time funds for rent, utilities, mortgage, transportation, medication and other direct needs. Long-term solutions and prevention require employment, benefits assistance, case management, health care and housing strategies.

The FreeStore FoodBank serves as a central provider of emergency assistance services, but most pantries are small and neighborhood-based. The faith community has a significant role in emergency assistance. Federal funds for emergency assistance through FEMA have decreased significantly.

Many emergency assistance programs use the regional VESTA database to track clients, measure services and to coordinate distribution of one-per-family items. Many emergency assistance agencies participate in a shared Learning Circle coordinated by the United Way.

Emergency Assistance providers within the Learning Circle have identified best-practice strategies to provide short-term emergency assistance while also addressing long-term solutions. These stabilization services include information and referral, coordinated links to employment and housing; benefits assistance, financial management and case management.

Current Community Level Goal: None

PLAN Cincinnati Goal: Make sustainable access to, and use of, fresh, healthy food a priority in all neighborhoods.

Potential City Goal: Reduce food insecurity rate. Decrease number of families in chronic crisis.

Baseline: The food insecurity rate in Hamilton County was 18% in 2010. In 2014, 16,590 households received food assistance in programs supported by the Human Services Fund.

Potential Progress Indicators:

- Number of Cincinnati families seeking emergency assistance.
- Number of emergency assistance clients receiving appropriate stabilization services.
- Number of families receiving services that show increased stability and resources using a standardized assessment.

Potential Strategies: A proposal process would ask local organizations to offer strategies to reduce hunger and improve family stability in Cincinnati. Human Services investment could be targeted for systemic improvements to address food insecurity, such as building the capacity of neighborhood emergency assistance agencies, coordinating resource sharing and improving access to stabilization services. Emergency assistance services also could be aligned with workforce development to ensure that food insecurity does not hinder job training participants from completing programs and obtaining work.